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THOMAS CRANMER AND HIS PLACE IN THE REFORMATION.

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THESIS

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THOMAS CRANMER AND HIS PLACE IN THE REFORMATION.

Before actually opening the doors of the subject of this essay and endeavoring to adjust Thomas Cranmer into an earned position in the room of the English Reformation we must briefly glance at the background of his experiences and first accord him a place in the picture of English history.

He was born July 2, 1489, of staunch Norman ancestry, in the little village of Aslacton, county of Nottingham. His father was a country gentleman of no great estate. At the age of fourteen Thomas left his home and entered Jesus College, Cambridge. Here the same characteristics which he had displayed in his early years also were revealed. He was timid to a fault and lacked self confidence. Upon his graduation a fellowship was conferred upon him and consequently his academic inclinations continued to find expression.

During these years of student life he came into contact with Erasmus who at this time was making his noted contributions to that revolution of literary taste which opened stores of sound and useful learning, and which seemed to appeal magnetically to the curiosity of thinking students. Erasmus had completed an interesting paraphrase of the New Testament. It was accomplished from the angle of a reformer and suggested endless parallelisms between the Jewish priesthood and the clergy, and portrayed the antagonism of Christ's teaching to ecclesiastical

injunctions together with vast voids between the spirit and the letter.

Until Cranmer attained the age of forty he wandered in academic shades and would have continued had not a simple accident revealed him to the King.

Cranmer married at an early age and it has been pointed out that his wife was related to the wife of the keeper of Dolphin Inn, at Cambridge. This marriage caused the forfeiture of Cranmer's scholarship. He moved to the Inn and his Catholic adversaries made much of the marriage claiming that he became an "ostler" at the Inn. After losing his fellowship he became a reader in Buckingham College.

The Enlistment in the King's Service.

Along in the course of events in England, while Cranmer was devoted to his literary pursuits, King Henry VIII, was endeavoring to secure a papal sanction for his divorce from Catherine of Aragon. This request the pope had refused, due undoubtedly to great external pressure which had been brought to bear upon him. If Henry had obtained this sanction, papal power might today still be in vogue in England. Several and varied attempts were made to secure a divorce or separation, but without avail. While engaged in this procedure, two of the King's aides, Almoner Fox and Secretary Stephen Gardiner, happened to sojourn at the home of a Mr. Cressy where Thomas Cranmer resided as tutor of Mr. Cressy's son. During a discussion with the King's men Cranmer expressed his belief that Henry could well manage without a papal decision. He suggested securing opinions from the University divines and then taking suitable action according to their decisions. The King was duly informed of this new proposition and a consultation of Cranmer and King followed shortly.

When King Henry heard of the "Cambridge idea" advanced by the then obscure tutor he triumphantly exclaimed, "By God, that man hath the right sow by the ear." He called for Cranmer and the learned tutor had the opportunity of listening to the proposals for royal service which His Highness the King advanced. Cranmer was a type of casuist, a theorist minus pugnacity and the King noted carefully that the Cranmer metal

seemed just the correct alloy.

This consultation turned the Cranmerian career into other than purely scholastic channels. Life was now destined to be a series of little moral surprises. Often was he to discover to his great dismay that his master was involved in some new denouement. But the die was cast and destiny had called him to become the master architect of the post papal Catholic Church in England. If the veil of the future could have been lifted Cranmer might well have shuddered at its stern revelation but well it is that no mortal knows what tomorrow's sunrise may bring.

The King had desired a man for his services, of undeniable learning, unblemished character, who held convenient theories, in whose veins the milk of obedience flowed and whose will concerning the Church and State might be subservient to his own, and this man he found in Cranmer.

When the invitation was extended, Cranmer balked, hesitated for a time but finally accepted reluctantly. Sufficient urging had dissolved his hesitancy and it is known that he entered into the execution of public affairs against his will. Well he knew both his love for learning, and the fact that the duties of royal service called for strenuous effort and was beset with difficulties, and torn between the two a decision was not easily reached. He also questioned himself as to whether or not he was fully capable of shouldering the heavy burden of responsibility.

In the eyes of the clergy of certain beliefs this acceptance proved him to be a traitor to a sacred trust and the tool of lay usurpers. He was not a master spirit, he was gentle, charitable, striving to render a service such as an iron-willed fighter, not a scholar should have chosen.

The King's Matter and the Appeal to the Universities.

Immediately following the adoption of this new plan of appealing to the Universities, efforts were begun and during the year 1530 the King's matter was super prominent. Agents were busily engaged abroad securing decisions from the Universities on the question of the pope's power to dispense with the law against marrying a deceased brother's wife.

Prince Arthur the eldest son of Henry VII had married Catherine of Aragon. On the death of Arthur, Prince Henry now heir to the throne, married said Catherine, having received special dispensation from Pope Julius II inasmuch as the Church forbade marriage of any man to his deceased brother's wife. The validity of this process was in a formal manner recognized but many secretly doubted the efficacy of the dispensation at the time it was granted. The King himself did not overdo himself in exclaiming that doubt existed relative to the procedure. He was not averse to a loophole in case some European complication made a change profitable. However, the papal decree was issued and Henry and Catherine lived as man and wife for many years and one child, known as Queen Mary, survived.

The King's representatives at the Universities seeking to ascertain the legality of the dispensation met with considerable success. Centers of learning such as Bourges, Toulouse, Bologna, Oxford and Cambridge all

decided against the pope. This occurred in the year 1530. Gardiner and Fox engineered the vote and Thomas Cranmer took no personal part in it because at the end of 1529 he had been sent to Italy to negotiate terms of peace with pope Clement VII. The pope received him with the customary papal graciousness and compliments and even appointed him "Penitentiary," an office of considerable money value. Cranmer returned to England in September, 1530 without much actual achievement to grace his record for the foreign mission.

It may be true that some of the Universities were bribed, but all of them were not and the bribes were not on one side alone. It can be safely stated that though bribery may have had an important part, the decisions in general were given for other good and sufficient reasons.

The King's matter and the purpose of the proceedings created indignation among certain groups, and it is related that when that venerable trio, Bishop Longland, the Chancellor, and his companion appeared at Oxford to obtain the seal of the University they were routed by an indignant group which vigorously pelted the dignified committee with stones.

This appeal to the Universities had arisen in the mind of one man. It was a new and original thought. It was an idea that worked. The plan had been placed in writing. Henry simply invited his paragon to state his views of the situation in a book. Provision was made so that Cranmer could dwell in a congenial and pleasant atmosphere. Place

was found in the home of Thomas Boleyn later to become the Earl of Wiltshire. Thomas Boleyn was the father of Anne Boleyn who later married the King. In this home Cranmer learned to admire the future queen. And between July 1529 and the end of the year Cranmer wrote his treatise on the divorce.

Cranmer as an Ambassador.

In the year 1532 Thomas Cranmer was singled out by the King to become an important foreign envoy. He was sent to the court of Emperor Charles I in Germany where he remained until duty called him to a higher position. Very little seems to be definitely known concerning his political labors in Germany but it is stated that he revealed great powers of statesmanship.

It is significant to note that during the time he sojourned in Germany the Reformation there was in progress. Cranmer, with his keen perceptive powers, must have imbibed much from the leaders of the movement there that later would find expression in the movement in England. Especially do we notice a comparison between Melancthon and Cranmer that indicates that the activity and life of the German reformer had made an impression on Cranmer.

The Elevation to the Archbishopric.

When Archbishop Warham, who had been a determined fighter for the privileges of the clergy, died August 22, 1532, Cranmer who had been sent as an ambassador to Germany was recalled and elevated to the office of Archbishop. From now on until his death Cranmer's life is inevitably woven into the fabric of the Reformation in England. He was convinced that the marriage of Henry and Catherine was invalid by the very nature of things and therefore set about to formulate a plan of nullity.

At the Convention of the Upper and Lower Houses early in 1533 the nullity of the first marriage of Henry was declared and a month later, March 10, 1533, the bishops and archbishops held a consistory over which Cranmer in his official capacity as Primate presided (though not yet consecrated). While Cranmer pronounced sentence, he was but the mouthpiece of the rest and they were all in as deep as he.

Papal bulls had been obtained for the appointment of Cranmer. But Thomas Cranmer had openly declared for the Crown and had prefaced his oath to the pope with the declaration that the oath would hold provided it did not clash with the pledge of loyalty he had given the King.

His installation followed immediately and in its wake came the Restraint of Appeals, a national abjuration of papal jurisdiction.

The Act confirmed the final character of jurisdiction of spiritual courts in England forbidding appeals from them to Rome. None was now allowed to appeal to Rome on pain of being deprived of goods and being imprisoned.

All appeals were now to be tried within the realm of the Courts of Bishops and Archbishops, and any matter relating to the King was to be laid before the House of Convocation in order that that body might hear the matter and final determination be reached.

Henry was undoubtedly an influential factor in this decision as he had been earlier, in 1531 when he compelled a reluctant Convocation to pass a declaration and subscribe to it in the following form: "We acknowledge His Majesty to be the singular Protector, only and Supreme Head, and so far as the laws of Christ allow, even Supreme Head of the English Church and Clergy."

Archbishop Warham, who was presiding when the above resolution was presented to the Canterbury Convocation called for the vote. Complete silence reigned. None seemed to voice an opinion. Then the Archbishop said, "Whosoever is silent seems to consent." Only one voice replied and it said, "Then we are all silent" and thus the clause which elevated Henry to the highest pinnacle in the Church passed unanimously.

The Convocation had come under the sway of the King. In May 1532 Convocation had considered and signed a notable document known as the "Submission of the Clergy" In it they promised never to enact, put in use,

promulgate, or execute, any new canons or constitution, provincial or any other new ordinances, provincial or synodal, in our Convocation or synod in time coming, which Convocation is, always has been, and must be, assembled only by your Highness' commandment of writ, unless your Highness by your royal assent, shall license us to assemble our Convocation and to make, promulgate, and execute such constitutions and ordinances as shall be made in the same: and thereto give your royal assent and authority" These incidents reveal the determination of the King even before Crammer ascended the ecclesiastical heights.

After the Restraint of Appeals had passed a new act appeared called the Act of Restraint of Annates. It had been the custom of Rome to demand annates or the first fruits or first years income from every bishop or archbishop appointed. Gardiner, who recently had been appointed to Winchester, had to borrow heavily to meet the papal demands. In April, 1532 the Act passed, allowing only a tax of five per cent and it was decided that even if the pope refused to issue papal bulls for the coming consecration because of this it should be held regardless.

The King was not interested in relieving the clergy of their burdens and he did not urge this legislation from any altruistic motives, for he promptly had the payment of the annates, a substantial amount, diverted by Act of Parliament to his own use. This act restraining the annates was a blow to papal power. One by one the blows were falling and consequently former papal supremacy in England was becoming a memory.

The consecration of Cranmer as Archbishop of Canterbury took place at St. Stephen's, Westminster, March 30, 1553. When Henry appointed Cranmer to the high office he had previously secured consent from the Prior and Canons of Christ Church, Canterbury and from the pope, Clement VII. When Cranmer was consecrated the pope seemingly bowed to the inevitable and made no objection.

After Cranmer reached the pinnacle of authority in Church circles he lost no time in declaring that the pope had no power to license marriages such as Henry's and that the King and Catherine had never been man and wife. At the convocation on May 23, 1533 judgment was again given which voided the marriage to Catherine. Cranmer therefore was not alone in this decision for he was but the leader of an official commission in which the Bishops of Winchester (Gardiner), London (Stokesley), Bath (Clerk) and Lincoln (Longland) were allied with him and it was this group of men, together with himself, that held the same opinion.

Five days later, as spokesman for the official group, he acknowledged that the King and Anne were lawfully wed and on Whitsunday, June 1, 1533 in Westminster Abbey, at a glorious coronation, he crowned Anne as the Queen of England with the words, "Our dearest wife, the Lady Anne, our Queen!" Stories of Anne's beauty spread far and near but the enraged womanhood of England

thinking of the brutal treatment of Catherine, was filled with suppressed indignation. Catherine died in January, 1536.

On September seventh a daughter was born to Anne at Greenwich, a creation destined to humble the Spanish pride and to bear to final triumph the banner that had been raised aloft.

The King called a session of all bishops, clergy, monks, and friars for the sole purpose of declaring Elizabeth as the rightful heir as the Supreme Head of the Church of England. Sir Thomas More, the lord Chancellor, opposed this and stated that he would prefer to look "first to God, and after God, at the King." Henry never forgot this utterance. Henry would brook no protest against his will. As a result More was accused of high treason. He went to confession and communion in Chelsea Parish Church for the last time on the day of his trial. He told his judges that as St. Paul and Stephen were now friends in paradise they too would meet and be fast friends in heaven. While a prisoner in the Tower of London he wrote to his daughter Margaret with coal, no ink being allowed him.

When taken out to be beheaded on Tower Hill Margaret was there and broke through the guards, kissed her father, and then he marched bravely to his death and found those words true which he had often uttered that a man may lose his head and still have no harm. Needless to say, his death caused great horror in Europe.

In 1536 Henry had tired sufficiently of Anne and on May 17th of that year Crammer and an ecclesiastical court declared her marriage to Henry invalid. No grounds were given but two were supposed: preconduct with the Earl of Northumberland, and a previous affinity with Anne arising from the King's relations with Mary Boleyn.

Subsequent matrimonial ventures also proved to be failures as far as providing the desired male successor to the throne was concerned.

The General Trend of the Reformation in England.

The spark of moral enthusiasm kindled at Florence by the great Savonarola was caught in England by John Colet. He was born in 1466, the son of a wealthy land merchant. He received his schooling at Oxford and while still young was inspired with a thirst for the New Learning which Grocyn and Linacre were introducing from Italy.

In 1504 Colet, who possessed a character that was convincingly admirable, was made the dean of St. Pauls and established a great reputation as a preacher.

The new spirit took rise among men who stood for culture, order, and development. There was no contemplation of schism or revolution such as had occurred in Germany. But the leaders perceived their task to be the education of the public mind to an intelligent recognition of the need for both reform and order.

The reformation began directly, however, with the matrimonial proclivities of a monarch whose "capacity for discovering the identity of the dictates of conscience and convenience is quite one of the most surprising phenomena of history."

When Luther faced and defied papal authority King Henry took the field against him. For this effort the pope bestowed on Henry the grand title of "Defender of the Faith"

As we have seen, the King's eye was taken by the beautiful Anne Boleyn and his slumbering conscience was aroused. In his pathetic pleadings Catherine could readily see a ruse to get rid of her. Henry

was quite willing to quit her on political grounds, but more willing to be rid of her for personal reasons, and therefore persuaded himself that it was for conscientious reasons.

Several attempts were made to free the King, such as having Catherine enter religion and become a nun but Clement revoked the entire proceedings to Rome and he stood adamant for his convictions. Charles V of Germany was a nephew of Catherine and he exerted pressure on the pope. This denial caused the King considerable concern and the realization grew upon him that only via complete independence from Rome could the Kingly desires be satisfied.

Lutheran doctrine in England was not now regarded with the same suspicion as formerly. In fact there were those who were friendly to the new thought from Germany. And so the stage was set for the man and scholar, Thomas Cranmer, to walk out upon it.

Cranmer has been criticized by many because he assumed an aspect of slavish obsequiousness to the ruling powers. He was not a self seeking hypocrite but was thrown into contact with a really masterful personality and thus personally dazed, lost his own independent judgment and felt compelled to surrender to the dominating force.

The theological views of Cranmer seem to be reflections of the strongest influences with which he came in contact. At times it is indicated that he leans toward Zwinglianism, at other times toward Lutheranism, and again at times toward Calvinism. To follow through

this change of theology would involve us in innumerable intricate theological details that might well fill a volume and again one might altogether too easily find oneself snared up in purely ecclesiastical entanglements. The theology and principles of Cranmer will be noted as they find expression in his discourses, writings, and institutions. Be it sufficient to observe here that Cranmer seemed to adhere more to Wiclif of one hundred and fifty years earlier than he did to either Calvin or Luther.

During the Reformation the action of the state in forcibly acquiring ecclesiastical property was a matter of great controversy and grave concern. If Cranmer, as alleged, gave a willing assent to the act of spoliation or the program of transferring all endowments of chantries, hospitals and similar foundations, he dissented from the application of the funds. His recommendation was to erect colleges and seminaries throughout the country in order that sound learning and religious education might improve the quality of knowledge possessed by the priests.

The Reformation had begun on the continent and there it expanded and developed into a veritable volcanic revolution which spilled over into England. Constant contact with the continent was maintained by the zealous reformers of England. Communications flew back and forth among the leaders and among the communications were the much discussed

Zurich letters which were written in England and sent to the continent. For some time the authority of these epistles remained unquestioned. Now they are generally looked upon as being spurious. They contained information revealing the fact that Cranmer was once a Lutheran but was converted by a Lasco into the Zwinglian belief to which he remained true until his death.

The Eucharist was a source of constant irritation. It was a matter of faith and therefore one that was handled with difficulty. Cranmer held one view and his colleagues held another. They wanted him to alter his views. For many years he was a stickler for the carnal presence in the Eucharist and seemed greatly prejudiced to that opinion. "It seemed also that he built this his error upon the words of the Scripture, taking the sense of "This is my body" literally. This belief he held until the last year of Henry's reign when by mature and calm deliberation and conference he acquitted himself of that unsound doctrine."

Cranmer wrote a remarkable "Defence of the True Doctrine of the Sacrament." This disputation is divided into five parts. The first part contains and expounds the true doctrine of the Eucharist, and a brief enumeration of the various abuses by which it had been corrupted. The second part was devoted to the subject of transubstantiation and its object is to show that the notion (though it is held by both the Lutherans and Catholics) is contradictory to the Word of God and to the reason and sense

of man and to the belief of the ancient fathers of the Church. The third part explains the meaning of the assertion that Christ is present in the Holy Supper and its object is to show that "as our regeneration in Christ, by baptism is spiritual, even so our eating and drinking is a spiritual feeding; which kind of regeneration and feeding requires no real and corporeal presence of Christ, but only his presence in spirit, grace and effectual operation." Bread and wine are not turned into a corporeal presence but into the virtue of Christ's flesh and blood.

The fourth part was directed against the notion that the wicked are capable of participation in the "virtue and benefit of Christ's body and blood."

The fifth section exposes the grand perversion of Romish sacrifice of the mass. Sacrifice in a strict sense is only applicable to the immolation of Christ on the cross and to the Mosaic offerings by which it was prefigured and which may therefore be virtually identified with it and when mass is termed sacrifice offered by the Church it is so designed merely by a sort of figurative use of the phrase in common with all the spiritual services of Christian men.

The truth of the matter is undoubtedly that Cranmer as Primate was not irresponsible and could alter communion by no means with a flourish of his pen when later he changed his views concerning it. The thorough study which Bishop Ridley had made in this subject is conceded to have had considerable influence in changing Cranmer's conception of the Eucharist.

Cranmer had now drifted away from the old conception to the new spiritual conception outlined in his defence statement. The Lutheran idea was that the corporeal presence without change was lodged in the substance of the consecrated elements. But to bring about a change in the minds of the people was another and more difficult matter. It was a matter that could not be settled by one fiat act and Cranmer, when the new light dawned upon him, began the process of educating the Church over which he presided. Beside the defence indicated he sought by the proper method to remove in the course of time the uncertain and irritable situation. He wrote furthermore the "Ten Articles for the establishment of Christian quietness;" "the Institution of the Christian man;" and the "Necessary Erudition of a Christian man." In all of these the Eucharist is a major topic and Cranmer's influence and clear conceptions sparkle on their pages.

Cranmer has been roundly criticized for his weaknesses. In doctrine it is claimed that he scurried from one position to another and wherever he ran a whole rabble of innovators trailed along with him. It has been said that Cranmer, being of the vacillating type, was blown about by "every wind of doctrine from the Rhine."

Concerning the charges that Cranmer was an advocate of persecutions it must be remembered that he argued for three days boldly against the passing of the "Six Articles" which passed in 1537 wherein the real presence in the Eucharist was set forth explicitly in terms of the theory

of transubstantiation and confirmed the permanence of the vows of celibacy. Both of these were aimed at the German point of view. Both also smote Cranmer hip and thigh. For in the year previous, 1536, Cranmer had written his "Ten Articles" to establish Christian quietness and in which he does not depart very far from the Catholic doctrine but places emphasis and distinction between ordinances having divine authority and human authority. Cranmer had also married the daughter of the Lutheran Osiander and this union was accounted valid morally though it was not technically recognized. Cranmer opposed the tampering in the "Six Articles" and he spoke repeatedly against the measure and urged that the penalty of death ought not to be imposed for mere matters of opinion, but in spite of his remonstrances the Act was forced through Parliament. It then became a law and those who broke it were well aware of the penalty, and any action taken later by Cranmer was done in strict obedience to duty and the King's command.

Cranmer was a democratic gentleman who lived in an age of snobbery. He boasted of his yeoman stock. He was a man of the people, a man therefore who understood and sympathized with them. For the people, at great personal risk, he fought the new, "Landlordism" which was threatening to tear asunder the banners of equality. He advocated education for all groups. He opposed the undemocratic Roman idea of drawing the priests from the people and then withdrawing them from the people. Such things as caste, indirect communion through the priests, the Latin Bible a sealed

book, awoke revolt in his soul, and stirred to the depths of his being he proclaimed that these things lead not to real religion but to superstition.

On November 3, 1529 the historically famous Reformation Parliament assembled and continued to sit for seven years. The main work of this session of Parliament consisted in the submission of the clergy. It placed Henry in the position of the pope, Clement VII, as the Supreme Head of the Church in England; it increased the royal power; it decreed the dissolution of monasteries; it deprived the clergy of independent powers of legislation in convocation; and it broke the power of the Bishops by making them royal appointees. Thus we can readily note that there was a constant trend in England to shackle the religious authorities. The power of the King was not only reflected in the actions of his Primate but it seems to be very evident in the handiwork of the Reformation Parliament also.

In 1540 Cranmer was busily engaged in reforming the ecclesiastical foundation in Canterbury, and in establishing a grammar school. The Commissioners sought to limit the enrollment of this institution of learning to the sons of the wealthy gentry, but Cranmer again became the champion of the common people and was finally successful in his endeavors. The Primate said, "If the gentleman's son be apt, let him be admitted: if not let the poor man's child that is apt, enter his room"

Thus we have seen that the Reformation in England did not follow any definite plan. It did not follow Luther even though many lines of the movement

are similar. It is thought that Cranmer wished to develop a reformation similar to the German and desired to act in conjunction with Luther but was hindered. The great influx of foreigners in 1548 included many Calvinists and that brand of thinking began to saturate English thought.

Ever and again in the movement the question of the eucharist appeared and Cranmer, beaten from pillar to post in the controversy, seemed to arrive at the more spiritual conception. And this marks the leader, he had courage to launch out into new adventures, never fully knowing what his new experience might mean. He was eager to progress and many there were who followed in his footsteps.

The Influence and Affect of Henry VIII on the Reformation.

All literature of the period indicates the royal influence in ecclesiastical affairs during the Reformation. While royal decrees have always been a vital factor in religious matters it is true that never in history has royal intervention had a greater part in the affairs of the Church. In this period the actual history of the Church can be traced through the royal documents issued by the King and Parliament. For the year 1532 four royal documents are recorded and for 1534 ten have found their way into the records, and no other year in history, as far as the Church of England is concerned, can equal this year for either the number or the importance of the decrees. This fact simply reveals the tremendous influence of Henry VIII on the Reformation in general and on the spirits guiding this major movement in particular.

A book written by a gentleman named Sanders on the "English Schism" would compel the reader to believe that Cranmer believed in the carnal presence in the communion because Henry thought so; and that Cranmer had so devoted himself to the King that he in all matters of belief adjusted himself to the King's faith, and because of this tendency to conform to the King's beliefs, Sanders had nicknamed Cranmer, "Henricanus." Following this daring exposure a storm broke and the defenders of Cranmer smothered this unfortunate with derision which ripped the prefix 'gentleman' from his name.

When Cromwell who had served the King faithfully and well was ousted from

office and removed from the King's favor Cranmer was one of the few who stood by Cromwell and plead for his cause.

The question of the authority relative to the supposed Gostwick episode is unsettled. It is to be noticed that Strype, who writes carefully and in detail, does not mention the incident. The episode has found its way into "Harpers Parallel Source Problems". Several historians mention the fact and the event is mentioned also in several church histories inasmuch as it reacts in Cranmer's favor. In essence the story runs as follows: a Kentish Knight, Sir John Gostwick, attacked Cranmer in Parliament for his preaching and reading in Kent. "Tell that varlet," the King sent word, "that if he does not acknowledge his fault unto my Lord of Canterbury I will soon make him a poor Gostwick and otherwise punish him to the example of others." And Gostwick then acknowledged his grave "mistake and error."

A certain Elizabeth Barton was a nun of Kent who was afflicted with violent epileptic affections which were exalted by her accomplices into mystic trances and which became a veiled treason in the shape of prophecy. Abel, the ecclesiastical agent of Catherine, was an accomplice of the nun, and More, Warham and Fisher had all been dupes of this fake. For eight years this propaganda assailing the King continued. It was stoutly claimed that Henry was to die a villains death and even the day of his demise was set. Henry perhaps grew nervous concerning these predictions for finally he sent Cranmer

out to investigate. Though many of the divines were baffled over this expression of miraculous power it was Cranmer who detected the fraud which had made use of every possible method, including ventriloquism, to deceive. After the detection of the humbug the nun of Kent was speedily executed by the King's command.

Joan Bocher was another victim of the persecution. She had held heretical opinions respecting the incarnation of the Saviour. She was excommunicated by Cranmer and in 1550 she perished in the flames.

In 1551 George Van Parre, a Dutchman, was brought before the judges to answer to heretical opinions concerning the divinity of Christ. Though Cranmer, who was one of the judges, was not present personally at the trial his adherent Goodrich represented him and did not oppose the decision rendered.

On Thursday night, January 27, 1547 while Henry lay dying he thought of Cranmer and called him at midnight to his bedside. When Cranmer came Henry was speechless and almost unconscious. Cranmer asked him for a token of his trust in Christ but all Henry could do was to wring the hand of the Primate, who had been his friend, servant, and spiritual counsellor, and shortly after, on Friday, January 28, 1547 the King passed away.

It has been pointed out that in general the Reformation under Henry VIII was constitutional, structural, financial and social but not religious. Its greatest achievement was the act of separation from Rome. Many acts were passed which tended to to remove all control from the pope and place them in

the crown. We have now a Church which is self directing, a hierarchy which is English. But the progress which had been made under Henry is especially notable for the fact that it paved the way for a more religious Reformation and later we shall see more emphasis on the purely spiritual aspects of the movement. The external structure of the Church was well begun and later the internal life of the Church was to receive its share of attention.

There are, in conclusion, three great steps toward freedom which were taken during the reign of Henry VIII. First is the checking of the extravagance of rites and the idolatrous worship of shrines and images and relics.

Secondly the construction of a new formulae of faith and the admission that some of the moot religious questions were quite unsettled. Each restatement of the Catholic doctrine carried with it at least a hint of possible modification.

And finally the Scriptures were brought within the general reach of the public and the people were enabled to witness the difference between Scriptural foundations and ecclesiastical superstructure.

The Anglican Church did not break with the past as the Calvinistic and Lutheran groups had done nor did it reject the new criticism but molded its Reformation of organization and authority and faith in such a manner so as to remain sufficiently acceptable to moderate men of both parties. Cranmer succeeded in evolving a Church which was at once Catholic and Protestant.

Cranmer lacked self-reliance. He had warm personal friendship and regard for both Cromwell and Anne Boleyn but when the King declared them guilty he could only admit, though unconvinced by evidence, that guilty they must be. It is weakness, not born of fear or expediency, but of a man who does not trust his own judgment if it is severely opposed by that of another man in whom he has learned to place implicit reliance.

He possessed moral courage. He went against Henry in several matters, including that of the Six Articles and the King's Book and his enemies rejoiced as they believed that his boldness had spelled his destruction.

Plots Against Cranmer.

It has been pointed out that many of the acts that were passed in the reign of Henry VIII were in reality passed by Roman Catholics. When they were passed there was no thought of a Reformation. If these Acts constituted a schism then the authors, including strong Catholic supporters such as Gardiner, Heath, Tunstall, Bonner and Stokesley, "the greatest opposers of the Reformation and the greatest enemies of the Protestants" were the responsible schismatics.

Among all these leaders who were faithful to Rome Cranmer had unending dispute. But Gardiner was the main thorn in Cranmer's side. Gardiner was the Bishop of Winchester and being six years Cranmer's senior was indignant that a mere King's chaplain should be elevated above himself who already was a bishop and furthermore was the Secretary of State, and had long been employed in the King's service. With such a man for a deadly foe, Cranmer was certain that he was setting out on a treacherous sea and that grave danger loomed in the offing. Gardiner was bitterly opposed to everything that smacked of Reformation. He was revengeful and unscrupulous. Geike says, "His cunning was well supported by tact, and both were made dangerous by his tenacity." He brought Cromwell to the block and would gladly have done likewise with Cranmer

but for the acuteness of Henry.

Gardiner opposed the popular circulation of the Scriptures. He had admitted Henry's supremacy only in form. He was reconciled to the Papal authority and when the opportunity was offered under Queen Mary he at once became the great and valiant champion of Rome.

To Gardiner may well be attributed many of the persecutions that occurred during Henry's reign. It was Gardiner that conceived the thought that if his beloved Romanism was to conquer, Cranmer must be destroyed. The Six Articles suggested a scheme. A Dr. London was willing to become an accomplice in the conspiracy and was to act as an agent. He was sent to Canterbury to manufacture charges against the Archbishop. Many charges were effected and the serious accusations were contained in a great packet. In proper form and with great solemnity Gardiner delivered the packet to the King. But the results were quite different from the expectations.

Henry, upon receiving the packet, immediately entered his barge and hurried over to Lambeth and handed the charges to the Primate. Cranmer read the accusations and urged the King to select a commission to examine. In the meantime he explained his side of the case. Henry was touched by the simplicity and frankness of his Archbishop and fully disclosed that he believed to be a conspiracy against him. A commission was duly appointed and Cranmer

was made the chief member of it. The inquiry revealed that some men to whom Cranmer had rendered special services were among those who were plotting his death. But in the end the Primate's gentleness and spirit won the admiration of all. Gardiner never fully recovered the influence which he lost as a result of this dastardly attempt to destroy his rival.

The English Prayer-Book.

The English Prayer-Book of 1549 stands as a monument to Cranmer's tolerance and discrimination. He showed an abundance of strength in this achievement, for throughout the conflict in attaining this goal he stood more adamant on principles than did Luther, for while the peasants could storm and stampede Luther the masses were powerless with Cranmer.

The history of the Prayer-Book dates back to the Bishop's Book of 1537 at which time Cranmer thought it conducive to the Christian growth of the common people in knowledge and religion to disentangle them from the gross ignorance and superstition then prevailing. And consequently a commission was appointed to draft this book and set forth "a truth of religion purged of errors and heresies." In November of 1548, the work of the commission was completed and the first Book of Common Prayer, in English, a work mainly due to Cranmer's wide and extensive liturgical study and research, was presented to the King. In this and in other ventures Cranmer had a formidable foe in Gardiner. The Bishop's Book was completed and the King made his animadversions and the Book in completed form was issued late in 1537 and called the Bishops Book, a forerunner of the Prayer-Book issued in 1549. This is a "godly book of religion, not much unlike the book set forth by King Edward VI except in two points." In 1540 this Book appears again as the King's Book, very much enlarged. In 1542 the King's Book was

revised by Cranmer. In 1543 it was published by authority as a doctrine for all subjects to use and follow. Cranmer enjoined it to be made public in the diocese and allowed no preaching or arguing against it. Gardiner had introduced some points into the book which Cranmer did not believe in nor subscribe to but because Parliament had ratified the Book the Archbishop would countenance no preaching contrary to it.

As we have recorded, in 1548 the Book of Common Prayer was worked out in Windsor. In December it came up before the House of Lords and in the debate Cranmer, Ridley and Sir Thomas Smith were eagerly for it while Tunstall, Bonner, Thirlby and Heath as eagerly opposed it. This book bears little resemblance to the doctrine of the Calvinistic and Zwinglian groups but shows a closer affinity to the Lutheran liturgy. The English Reformation did not follow the German movement but the two movements often seemed to run in parallel lines. It was the wish of Cranmer to act in conjunction with the German Protestants. In 1548 there was a great influx of foreigners into England and among them were great hosts of Calvinists and it can not be denied that the Calvinistic theology shows itself in the working of the Prayer-Book commission.

But the concessions to any of the religious movements directly must be considered slight. The influence of them all is noted, including that of Peter Martyr, Bucer, Knox and Hooper. But nevertheless it is the most

conservative of all the Reformation liturgies and the authors have endeavored to build upon rather than destroy the past.

The Book made its appearance in 1548. It will forever remain as one of the great achievements of Thomas Cranmer. This Book was grounded on the liturgies of the primitive church, omitting most of the Romish additions and adopting the phraseology of the Scriptures.

It was by the narrow margin of 12 to 8 that the Prayer-Book was passed by the House of Lords. Three days of debate raged over the matter of the Eucharist. The real Presence of Christ in the elements, whether or not evil men could receive the body of Christ and transubstantiation were keenly debated. Cranmer stressed the new liberal and spiritual point of view, holding that faith is not to believe Him to actually be in the bread and wine but that He is in heaven and He is eaten with the heart and not with the mouth and only the good can do that. The evil may partake of the Sacrament but he neither had Christ's body nor had eaten it. The bread and wine were to be changed inwardly. The change was not to be in the bread but in the receiver.

The acts of adoration by the priests were omitted and solitary masses were forbidden. The characteristic of a full and final substitution of the vernacular for the Latin was a primary achievement. It maintained communion

in both kinds and laid down the principle of auricular confession as not being absolutely necessary. For the noble language of the English rendering which has made the Prayer-Book a masterpiece of literature Cranmer was in the main responsible.

Cranmer had devoted an infinity of study to the existing liturgies, Eastern as well as Western, and the accumulated stores of his learning were frequently utilized in amending and improving the common material on which his colleagues were engaged.

The Prayer-Book was fiercely attacked by many and multitudes cried out in protest against its innovations. They complained that it was a "Christmas play" in comparison with the real thing. The rites to which they were accustomed had always been considered mysterious, used as they were in a foreign language, but now these ceremonies became tawdry and trite in the vernacular.

But over against the opposition were the majority who readily saw the greatness of Cranmer written in the pages of the Book. His learning, industry and prudence glistened on its pages. Since the elevation to the Primacy he had carried on an extensive correspondence with the reformers in Germany and this had brought him into a certain jeopardy with some. He had one thought in mind, that being to remedy the disharmony between the Protestant groups and to seek

if possible, some mutually agreeable Confession of Faith. Cranmer had mentioned to Henry that he wished for some religious agreement to be established and realized in all the Churches apposing Rome. Philip Melancthon of Germany had similar ideas and in general possessed a temper congenial with that of Cranmer. Many deemed Melancthon superior to Luther. Melancthon had often been invited to England but he never came. The Roman church was also gravely concerned lest all the forces outside of the hierarchy should amalgamate into one body. Several reasons appear to have hindered any earlier union. No satisfactory conclusion could be reached as to ecclesiastical government. They could not agree on the Lord's Supper nor could they agree on the extent of Christian redemption and the inscrutable decrees of God. Cranmer, seeing that there was no possibility of general union of forces, then set to work to establish the faith of his own people in England. Cranmer can also be acclaimed as the earliest Protestant exponent of church union.

In January 1549 Parliament by the Act of Uniformity imposed the Book on all English subjects. There were many vigorous objections to this Act and Princess Mary refused to conform, and heard private mass within the sanctity of her own home. The new Book failed to completely satisfy the masses. There was too much of Rome in it for the "hotgospellers" and too little of Rome in it for the more simple country folk living under the

spell of the priests inclined to Rome.

* The result of the objections was that in 1552 a Second Act of Uniformity was passed. During 1551 the Prayer-Book had been carefully revised and corrected by Crammer and other authorities. The revised edition was printed, and Parliament designated All Saints Day of 1552 as the day when its use was to begin. Objection was made to the posture of kneeling and also to the words used by the priest to the communicant. By the revised Book all copes and vestments were forbidden throughout England. The Book was also translated into French for the King's French subjects. In the revised edition the priest became a minister and the altar becomes a table. Communion was to be received kneeling and the posture did not mean the adoration to Christ's real presence. Penalties were imposed on clergy and laity for the non-observance of these rites. For non-attendance at services on Sundays and holidays excommunication resulted, and for attending another form of worship six months imprisonment for the first offence, one year for the second, and life imprisonment for the third offence.

The changes which had come about in the Prayer-Book had to some extent been caused by the fact that a younger race of clergy was rising and the early prejudices of the veteran Reformers did not affect them seriously and they were more concerned with a sweeping change from the

old Romish system of details to a newer order still loyal to the episcopacy.

In the Prayer-Book of 1549 the following is written: "The priest shall first receive the communion in both kinds." The Book of 1552 says, "The minister shall first receive." The Book of 1549 contains, "The body of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve thy body and soul to everlasting life." In the newer edition we read, "Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on Him in thy heart, by faith, with thanksgiving." The changes in the second Book do not signify the adoption of a newer doctrinal position as much as it represents a more careful expression of that which an unwilling clergy had found capable of double interpretation.

The Bible.

John Wicliff, "the morning star of the Reformation" had written a translation of the Bible based on the Latin Vulgate. Years later, in 1526, Tyndale's New Testament appeared, based on the Greek of Erasmus, and copies of it were smuggled into England. In 1532 the whole Bible was printed, and reprinted some four or five years later. The translator of this Bible was this same William Tyndale, with the help of Miles Coverdale. Before the second edition was finished Tyndale was put to death for his religion and his name faded into ignominy as one burnt as a heretic, but his crowning work was published under the disguise of "Matthew's Bible." It was worked upon by John Rogers but was mostly from the mind of Tyndale with the exception of the latter part of the Old Testament which was borrowed from Coverdale. It was dedicated to the King, and Cranmer urged Cromwell to secure for it the Royal License. Henry sanctioned it and ordered it placed in every quire "for every man that will, to look and read therein." Thus the scholarship of the burned heretic, Tyndale, was ordered publicly displayed throughout the realm.

A revised edition of Matthew's Bible was later printed, a Bible in the largest volume, which omitted several of the prologues and annotations

found in the issue previous. Miles Coverdale was the chief overseer of the work, mending it in several places. This issue was called the "Great Bible." The work of printing had been begun in Paris but owing to the persecution of the Inquisition, the translators moved to London with their presses to complete the work. The Bible made its appearance in 1538 having a preface written by Cranmer and therefore is the translation which often has borne Cranmer's name.

In this Great Bible Cranmer was vitally interested, and in the preface his words indicated the inestimable privileges of those who rightly use the Scriptures. In May 1541, the King again issued a proclamation ordering a copy to be supplied for every parish. An English Bible for all the people was the desire of Cranmer's heart and at the first convocation over which he presided he presented a plan for the translation of the Bible into English.

Over in Geneva the Continental reformers under Calvin and Beza were busily engaged in translating a Bible later known as the "Geneva Bible." This was published in 1560. It was a careful and scholarly work containing marginal notes advocating the extreme principles of the Puritans. In Germany the Reformers had completed translations of the Scriptures. In 1522 Luther's New Testament appeared and ten years later his Old Testament was completed.

In 1568 the Bishops in England had completed the revision of the Great Bible inasmuch as the Geneva Bible had become so popular that the Great Bible was in danger of being superseded by it.

The Bible had a profound effect on the people. It opened a wonderful field of literature for them and they found its learning and language to be unequalled in beauty and strength. It would be impossible for mere man to detect the myriad of hidden recesses into which the wholesome influence of the Bible has trickled, and consequently the characters which participated in making this valuable literary and spiritual treasure a part of everyman's library. They have accomplished beyond description. They are worthy our most fulsome praise and gratitude. And stalking as a colossal giant in the triumph in procuring the Bible for the people is the man, Thomas Cranmer.

Cranmer and the Reformation During the Reign of Edward VI.

On the death of Henry VIII in 1547 young Edward, the Prince of Wales, who was then less than ten years of age ascended the throne. Though young he kept a diary which is now one of the treasures of the British Museum. He reigned for but six years but in this time his reign gave the Reformation its greatest blessings and impetus.

Archbishop Cranmer officiated at the coronation of the young King and in so doing he struck a serious note of warning in his discourse when he likened Edward to the boy king Josiah who destroyed the images and otherwise purified the religion of the Kingdom of Judah.

A council of sixteen had been appointed to govern the Kingdom during the King's minority. We have noted the importance of the Prayer-Book which came into being during Edward's reign.

The latter part of the reign of Edward VI was filled with political intrigues which resulted in the execution of Somerset, and included the ambitious claims projected by Northumberland on behalf of Lady Jane Grey. Somerset and Cranmer worked together in cooperation on all matters save that of the chantries. There are those who claim that the Protector forced Protestantism on a reluctant nation. However, Cranmer

was foremost in his defence of Somerset and later when the nobles engaged in proceeding against the Protector it was Cranmer's letters on his behalf that induced the nobles to hesitate for a time in their determination.

When Cranmer as a member of the Council was called upon to sign the instruments for the placing of the English crown on Lady Jane Grey he at first refused, alleging his oath to the King. But at the urgent request of Edward, and on the assurance of the highest legal authorities in the land, Cranmer consented and signed.

It was also during the reign of Edward that the Six Articles, which Cranmer had bitterly opposed and which had been called the "Bloody Statute" or the "Whip with Six Strings" were repealed. These Articles contained one provision that demanded the death penalty for denying Transubstantiation. The other five Articles held that: communion in both kinds was unnecessary; marriage of priests was unlawful and the laws of chastity must be observed; private masses were to be continued; and auricular confession was necessary. The Treason Acts were repealed. These had dealt with the question of the King's supremacy and any who imagined any harm to the King or even wished to deprive him of any title was adjudged guilty of high treason. Other abuses were also removed and many of the actions taken by Henry, contrary to the spirit of real religion, were expunged from the record. A new order of service was inaugurated, marriage of the clergy was allowed, in communion

the cup was given the laity, and creeping to the cross and the use of ashes and palms were abolished.

On Cranmer's advice a Royal Commission was formed to visit the Churches in the six Church districts of England. The Commissioners were to report on the state of the Church and carry out the enactments of Parliament pertaining to the Reformation. The clergy was found by this Commission to be in a sad state of ignorance and utterly incapable of performing their duties. To remedy this evil Cranmer prepared a series of "Homilies" to be read from the pulpits. This work was an exposition of orthodox doctrine. It said little of the sacraments and nothing on the sacrament of the altar. The clergy were to read these to the people instead of preaching to them. Gloucester was visited and of the three hundred and eleven clergy Bishop Hooper was astonished to find that one hundred sixty eight could not repeat the Ten Commandments, thirty one were ignorant of the author of the Lord's Prayer, and forty could not tell where it was to be found. The discourse entitled "Salvation" in Cranmer's famous Homilies proved to be a masterpiece. Bonner and Gardiner opposed Cranmer's undertaking and they so mightily objected to the neglect of the sacraments and the exclusion of charity as a means of salvation in the homily of "Salvation" that the authorities deemed it advisable for Gardiner to cool off somewhat in the

local bastille and he was imprisoned forthwith for several weeks in the Fleet.

In 1549 Cranmer drew up a set of articles of religion to which applicants for permits to lecture and preach must subscribe. In 1551 these articles were submitted to his fellow bishops for their consideration and advice. In May 1552 the Council ordered him to produce these forty-two articles which were then revised and amended by several leading divines. Cranmer then hoped to secure royal sanction for the forty-two articles, "and then I trust that such a concord and quietness in religion shall shortly follow thereof as else is not to be looked for for many years." In these articles Cranmer had clearly outlined his faith and creed. In May 1553 the King's mandate sanctioning the articles were issued. These articles were a bulwark against the Catholic Church. They were not darkened by predestination. And much of its material can be traced back to its source which is found in the Augsburg Confession. When Cranmer was on trial before Mary he acknowledged his authorship of the doctrine of the Church as summed up in the forty-two articles.

When Cranmer found that his hope of union with other reforming factions was impossible he set about to mold the opinion of the people of his own land to bring about unity. Other leaders had collaborated with Cranmer in the work, but his broad, soft touch lay upon the articles when they emerged from the furnace of discussion and compromise. In these articles the Lutheran teaching of the Eucharist was rejected.

In 1563 these Articles were revised and four of the Edwardine articles which had related to the theories of the Anabaptists were omitted but an article relative to the wicked who partake of the Sacrament was added. Other articles were changed and amended so that at the conclusion thirty-nine articles remained. Many of these articles have found their way into other religious groups down through the ages. The Methodists have twenty-five articles of faith taken largely from the articles formulated by Cranmer and his co-workers.

It is said that a Reformation can only spring from the laity and is only adopted by the clergy of any Church after public opinion has made it orthodox. Cranmer was always zealous in the educating of the people and to this end he issued a catechism, which he had modified from a German original. In it is found the first move from the mass, for in it the picture of the priest placing the wafer into the mouth is changed for one representing Christ eating His last Supper with His Disciples, and it stated that in "the sacrament we receive the body and blood of Christ spiritually."

Cranmer and the Reformation During the Reign of Mary.

When Mary, a revengeful defender of Catholicism, became Queen there was a general exodus of divines to the continent where more religious toleration prevailed. Cranmer, the greatest of them all, chose to remain and face his foes. He remained at his palace at Lambeth and here he confronted the reactionary tendencies about him with an intrepidity which marked him out for general observation.

To Mary, Cranmer became increasingly obnoxious as he denounced the mass and the prevailing idea of the succession of the crown. Consequently he became exposed to royal authority and having only an evasive defence he was quickly hied away to the Tower. From here he petitioned Mary for pardon and release, "but she, as well for his religion sake, as also because he had bene a worker in the divorce of her father and mother would nether here hym nor see hym."

Mary had decided that her bounden duty was to extirpate all heresy and to avenge herself on the arch-heretic of all. But despite the gathering clouds and impending storm Cranmer, like Ridley and Latimer remained at his post.

Report had gained credence that when Mary had ascended the throne the Latin Mass had been set up on his orders at Canterbury Cathedral. When

Cranmer heard this it stirred him to flaming indignation and he said, "It was not I that did set up the Mass at Canterbury, but it was a false, flattering, lying and dissenting monk which caused Mass to be set up there, without mine advice or counsel."

Bloody Mary was determined in her beliefs, and her record of three hundred persecutions surpasses that of Henry in the thirty-eight years of his reign or that of Elizabeth in the forty-five years that she was Queen. The ghastly persecution labors continued and the heretics, whose chief heresy was the denial of Transubstantiation, went to the stake. For years the barbarous crusade was waged. Age or sex made no difference and even batches of the humble and illiterate were burned for their adherence to the simple truths learned from the Scriptures they had studied in their mother tongue. The pendulum made a swing to the terrible extreme and meanwhile church leaders grew weary of the bloody ordeals.

A special commission had been appointed to try Bishops Ridley and Latimer at Oxford. Both men adhered strictly to their convictions and did not waver in their faith. Of course the question of the Sacrament was the lively issue in the trial. They were both condemned as obstinate heretics and degraded. Bishop Brooks declared, "Latimer leaneth to Cranmer, Cranmer to Ridley, and Ridley to the singularity of his own wit." October 16, 1555,

both men were lead out to their execution and Latimer who perished first had encouraged Ridley with the words, "Be of good comfort, Master Ridley and play the man. We shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England as, I trust, shall never be put out."

Cranmer, while waiting in the Tower was perplexed and extremely fearful of suffering, and in this state of mind he is said to have signed six recantations. Certain scholars point out that he signed four submissions to the authority of the sovereign but as to doctrine he recanted nothing. It was when the writ of burning was issued that Cranmer completely broke down and signed the recantations, already written, which were handed him, and still no pardon was issued but a further demand was made that he voice the recantation in public.

September 12, 1555 the trial of Cranmer began. He was charged with many and varied things. Charges were entered against him of adultery for having married, and of perjury for breaking his oath to the Pope, as well as with blasphemy, incontinency and heresy. The blasphemy related to his view of the Sacrament of Holy Communion. Every possible lie and slander was used against him but the chief charge was that of his heresy in repudiating Rome.

An appeal had been forwarded to the Queen in which Cranmer pointed



out his inability to accept the Papal Supremacy because the Pope by his false doctrines and claims "played the part of anti-Christ, Christ's enemy and adversary." Pole replied by simply charging Cranmer with fraud, dissimulation, and perjury, in making an oath to the Pope at the time he was consecrated as Archbishop. On February 14, 1556 the Pope's sentence was received and the Primate of the Church was degraded.

At this juncture, with death inevitable, the abiding courage of the Archbishop gave way to fear and trembling. He asked to confer with Tunstall but was refused. But a pair of Spanish friars, Soto and Garcia, visited him and later he wrote a submission. He would admit papal supremacy and authority only as far as the laws of God and the realm would permit. The other submissions were all equivocal and amounted to little.

Then followed a sweeping recantation of all his heresies in which he acknowledged the supremacy of the Pope, stated his belief in Transubstantiation, and proclaimed against the whole heresy of Luther and Zwingli. When this document was spread the public deemed that there was not sufficient humility shining in it so another transcript was pushed under his hand for him to attach his signature to. This new document was replete with self-denunciation and humility. There are some who believe that Cranmer wrote the paper with his own hand but that Cardinal Pole was

the author of it, or had had much interest in its creation.

All these submissions, recantations and villifications of self did not aid one iota in sparing Cranmer's life or in securing favor in the eyes of Mary. He was taken away to listen to his own funeral discourse and to make the demanded public recantations. His signed recantations did not seem to take effect as far as the Papal agents or the staunch Catholics were concerned and they all wished to hear the Primate make a personal recantation. When the time came for him to utter himself he arose, confessed the grievousness of his sins and entreated pardon from the Throne of Grace.

The address which followed was not expected. The speech was divided into three main parts and stressed "love." Love for God, love for the King, and to one's neighbor, reflecting itself in obedience, charitability and liberality. And as to his writings he continued that he had been guilty of the setting forth "of writings contrary to truth which I thought in my heart and writ for fear of death and to save my life if it might be----as for the Pope I refuse him as Christ's enemy and an anti-Christ with all his false doctrine." And before he could be stopped by his dazed listeners who had expected a volume of recantations of former beliefs, he launched out in a recantation of his previous recantations and added, "As my hand offended in writing contrary to my heart therefore my hand shall first be punished, for if I may

come to the fire, it shall first be burned." He was quickly silenced and hurried to the stake where his words were literally fulfilled.

Strype relates of the execution as follows: "Fire being now put to him, he stretched out his right hand, and thrust it into the flame, and held it there a good space, before the fire came to any other part of his body; where his hand was seen of every man sensibly burning, crying with a loud voice, 'This hand hath offended;' As soon as the fire got up, he was very soon dead, never stirring or crying the while."

An Estimate of the Man.

One might deplore the final weakness of the Primate in signing the papers placed before him, yet the great and enduring work that he accomplished for the English Church have revealed merits and services that have far outweighed his faults. He preserved the continuity of the Church. He gave the English Reformation largeness and capacity. He towered above his contemporaries. He and other co-workers like Latimer and Ridley had loosed the yoke of Rome from the neck of the English Church.

In a capable book entitled, "Studies in the English Reformation" there is a statement by Dr. A. J. Mason which gives valuable insight concerning the life and work of Cranmer. It follows: "For two things Cranmer lived. He lived to restore as nearly as might be the Church of the Fathers, and he lived and he died for the rights and welfare of England. The independence of the English Crown, the freedom of the English Church from an intolerable foreign yoke, and English Bible, the English services---for these he labored with untiring and unostentatious diligence and with few mistakes considering the difficulties of his task. He made no claim to infallibility, but he laid open the way to the correction of whatever might be amiss in his own teaching or in the Church which he ruled when, in the magnificent demurrer which he made at his degradation, he appealed, not for himself only, but for all those

who should afterwards be on his side, to the next General Council. Under that broad shield which he threw over us we may confidently abide, and lay our cause before those who will candidly weigh the facts of history."

Cranmer has had many critics who, as Macauley, deny his right to be a martyr. Seemingly his life should be measured by its whole course and final manner of death. Doing this it seems difficult to simply fling railing accusations at Cranmer and then forget him. It is impossible for one today to imagine the mental anguish which must have been experienced at the prospect of a cruel and untimely death by execution. Cranmer is a reflection of the Peter type. Though Peter denied his Master he was found to be strong in crucial tests which came later. Cranmer did the same.

"His life is his best memorial. It speaks, through long years of his gentleness, his readiness to forgive, his meekness, his bounty, his zeal, his large-minded liberality of thought, and his splendid services to evangelical religion. The English Bible, the Articles, and the Prayer-Book are his imperishable monument."

Cranmer's death proved fruitless as far as the extirpation of heresy was concerned. The popular hatred of Mary surged into greater proportions and in turn her religious insanity raged more violently. She was literally "drunk with the blood of the saints."

What the Reformation in England would have been without Cranmer in the very thick of it would have been none can say. No person can even surmise what might have happened had he been elsewhere. We only know what did occur. And the truth is that one cannot think of the English Reformation without recognizing the Primate as a moving and guiding spirit in it. Being friendly to the ideals of Carlyle one's estimate of Cranmer must be that the values of the Reformation swept along in Cranmer's train. The imprint of his intellect, spirit, and gentleness is found upon the characteristics of the new movement. He lent dignity and scholarship to the Reformation. With another type of man as aide to Henry VIII the Reformation might have spent itself in lackadaisical sentimentalities and sanctions without any valuable contributions to the progress of thought and service.

It may be true that Cranmer's will was bent to suit the purposes of the King but the fact still remains that Cranmer's name will always be deeply engraved in the annals of his followers for the productions of his keen, indefatigable mind which to a large extent will offset the oft exaggerated vacillations.

The contributions which he made have exerted an influence on generations past and he will continue, through the creations of his mind and faith and pen, to exert an influence, directly and indirectly, in the future.

Though he had weaknesses, his life was great, but his death was greater and it will remain one of the most admirable in history, despite the critics. In this final act Cranmer glorified himself and that common humanity of which his weaknesses were characteristic. We can well agree with Strype when he says,

"Cranmer's martyrdom is his monument, and his name will outlast an epitath or a shrine."

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